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Sixth Step: Classification, Organization, and Religious Teaching.

1. Classify the material in your note-book, under the heads given in Study IX (p. 180).
2. Arrange the headings and organize the matter according to the plan followed in Study IX (p. 180).
3. Consider (1) how large a portion of the book is given to the account of David's sin, together with the evil consequences which followed it, and why this is so; (2) the particular teaching, not the possible inferences, which this whole story was by the divine writer intended to convey.

STUDY XI.—ABSALOM'S REBELLION; 2 SAM. 13-18.

- Remarks:** 1. The story of David's life as told in the Psalms is of equal importance with that narrated in the historical books; this will receive our attention a little further along in our work.
2. The private life of David stands closely connected with the history of the nation and the times.
 3. In all this study, try to read between the lines; for we must remember that only the most fragmentary material has come down to us.

First Step: Chaps. 13, 14, Family Troubles connected with Ammon and Absalom.

1. Read the chapter, noting down in connection with the verses treating of each subject, (1) the outrage committed by Ammon; (2) the vengeance taken by Absalom; (3) the reception of the news by David; (4) Absalom's flight; (5) Joab's stratagem and Absalom's return; (6) Absalom's person and family; (7) Absalom's re-admission to David's presence.
2. Read the chapters again and study more closely the following words and expressions: (1) *one of the fools in Israel* (13:13); (2) *will not withhold me from thee* (13:13); (3) *garment of divers colors* (13:18); (4) *hold now your peace* (13:20); (5) *neither good nor bad* (13:22); cf. Gen. 24:50; 31:24; (6) *upon his mule* (13:29); (7) *Talmai* (13:37); (8) *king's heart toward Absalom* (14:1); (9) *Tekoa* (14:2); (10) *two hundred shekels* (14:26).
3. Prepare a statement of the contents of the section, including also (1) an explanation of the connection between the contents of this chapter and those which precede and follow; (2) a statement of the argument of the woman of Tekoa contained in verses 13, 14; and (3) an indication of the mistake made by David in his treatment of Absalom.

Second Step: Chaps. 15:1-16:14, Absalom's Rebellion and David's Flight.

1. Read the chapters, noting (1) the preparations of Absalom for the rebellion; (2) the conspiracy made public; (3) the flight of the king from Jerusalem; (4) the fidelity of Ittai; (5) the ark returned to Jerusalem; (6) Hushai sent back; (7) the present of Ziba; (8) the curse pronounced by Shimei.
2. Read the chapter again and examine the following words and expressions: (1) *beside the way of the gate* (15:2); (2) *stole the hearts* (15:16); (3) *forty years* (15:7); (4) *in Hebron* (15:10); why was this place chosen? (5) *let us flee* (15:14); cf. Pss. 63, 3, 4, 26; (6) *Gittites* (15:18); (7) *the brook Kidron* (15:23); (8) *art thou not a seer?* (15:27); (9) *the ascent of Mt. Olivet* (15:30); (10) *head covered, bare-foot* (15:30); (11) *say unto Absalom* (15:34); the morality

of all this ; (12) *restore me the kingdom of my father* (16 : 3) ; (13) *blood of the house of Saul* (16 : 8).

3. Prepare an outline statement of the contents of the chapter and add to it (1) an explanation of David's sudden flight (why, warrior as he was, did he not hold his ground ?) (2) the traits of character displayed by him at this crisis in his history ; (3) the relation of the Psalms referred to above to this event.

Third Step : Chaps. 16 : 15-17 : 23, The Events transpiring at Jerusalem.

1. Read the chapters, noting (1) Absalom's entrance into the city ; (2) Hushai's offer of his services ; (3) Absalom's taking possession of the royal harem ; (4) the counsel proffered by Ahithophel ; (5) the counsel of Hushai ; (6) the message to David ; (7) the death of Ahithophel.
2. Read the chapters again and study the following words and expressions : (1) *the men of Israel* (16 : 15) ; (2) *and Ahithophel said* (16 : 21) ; the object of this advice ; (3) *oracle of God* (16 : 23) ; (4) *this night* (17 : 1) ; (5) *bear robbed of her whelps* (17 : 8) ; (6) *into the river* (17 : 13) ; (7) *appointed to defeat the good counsel* (17 : 14) ; (8) *a well in his court* (17 : 18) ; (9) *hung himself* (15 : 23) ; cf. Matt. 27 : 5.
3. Prepare a condensed statement of this section and in connection with this consider (1) the relative wisdom of Ahithophel's and Hushai's advice ; (2) the general policy adopted by Absalom in his effort to gain the throne.

Fourth Step : Chaps. 17 : 24-18 : 33, The Battle of Mahanaim.

1. Read the chapters, noting (1) the reception of David at Mahanaim ; (2) the battle ; (3) the death of Absalom ; (4) the grief of David.
2. Read the section again and study the following words and expressions : (1) *the daughter of Nahash* (17 : 25) ; the difficulty here involved ; (2) *beds and basins, etc.* (17 : 28) ; (3) *numbered* (18 : 1) ; (4) *captains of thousands and captains of hundreds* (18 : 1) ; (5) *the wood devoured more* (18 : 8) ; (6) *his head caught hold of the oak* (18 : 9) ; (7) *three darts* (18 : 14) ; (8) *a very great heap of stones* (18 : 17) ; (9) *king's dale* (18 : 18).
3. Prepare a condensed statement of the section and in connection with this statement, consider (1) the general conduct of Joab in his treatment of Absalom and (2) the occasion of the passionate grief of David.

Fifth Step : Classification and Organization.

1. Having in mind the various headings suggested on p. 180, read these chapters (13-18) and note down the material as thus called for.
2. Following the plan suggested in connection with "Study IX," organize the chapters of *this study* : (1) placing sub-headings and headings in such order as to strike the eye ; (2) recalling the details suggested by such headings ; (3) condensing the whole into an outline or statement on the subject, *Absalom's Rebellion*, the causes leading to it, the important events, the circumstances of its overthrow.

Sixth Step : Religious Teaching.

Again, we come face to face with the question, What is the religious teaching of a section ? The question is not to be answered (1) by selecting a thought here and a thought there ; (2) nor by connecting with the material all the possible teachings

which a fertile imagination can suggest; but (3) by grasping the material as a whole, as a unit, and from that determining the lesson which naturally and easily presents itself.

STUDY XII.—DAVID RESTORED; SOME APPENDICES; 2 SAM. 19-24.

Remarks: 1. It cannot be denied that the work which one must do when a single "study" includes six chapters, is necessarily superficial. If one's work stopped here, it would be lamentable enough.

2. It cannot be denied, on the other hand, that the work which one does, when he devotes his time to the study simply of verses, is really no work. It is absurd to do only this kind of work.
3. The truth is that both kinds must be done; the general work first, and then the careful and critical work.

First Step: Chaps. 19, 20, David Restored to the Throne.

1. Read the section, noting (1) the reproof of David by Joab; the negotiations between David and Judah in reference to the recall; (3) the return of the king and (4) the dispute between Judah and Israel; (5) the insurrection of Sheba; (6) the officers of the court after the restoration.
2. Read the chapters again and note fifteen words and expressions which deserve special study; examine these with such aids as may be within reach.
3. Prepare an outline of the events narrated in this section and in connection with this (1) account for the necessity of David's sending a private messenger to the tribe of Judah to persuade them to recall him; (2) compare the list of officers given in 20: 23-26 with that given in 8: 16-18.

Second Step: Chaps. 21: 1-22; 23: 8-39, The Famine; Heroic Exploits and Heroes.

1. Read these chapters, noting (1) the fact of the famine; (2) its occasion; (3) the execution of Saul's sons by way of atonement; (4) the burial of the bones of Saul and his sons.
2. Read the account of the *heroic exploits* in the Philistine wars (21: 15-22) and the account of *David's heroes* (23: 8-39), with the understanding that there is no connection between either of these and the story of the famine.
3. Select from each of these three distinct sections five or six expressions deserving especial study and examine them with the aid of such helps as may be within reach.
4. Prepare a brief statement of the contents of each section and in connection with these statements consider (1) the justice of the execution of Saul's sons for a crime committed by their father; (2) the relation of these appendices to each other and to the book as a whole.

Third Step: Chaps. 22; 23: 1-7, David's Psalm of Thanksgiving and Last Words.

1. Read chap. 22, noting (1) the address to God (vs. 2-4); the description of the writer's danger and his supplication (vs. 5-7); (3) Jehovah's manifestation in behalf of David (vs. 8-16); (1) the deliverance wrought because of his faithfulness (vs. 17-21); (5) the integrity of his life (vs. 22-25); (6) principle which regulates God's dealings with men (vs. 26-28); (7) the faithfulness of